

Annam

I. Its Quaint Folk, Civilized and Savage

By Mme. Gabrielle Vassal

Author of "On and Off Duty in Annam"

IN Annam, with its long stretch of tropic seaboard, its inland mountain barrier and jungles, there is a medley of races. The chief people are the Mongolian Annamese; next in importance come the Chinese traders; in the south are some of the last remnants of the Malay-like nation of Chams, who once held most of the coastal lands; and in the forested interior is a wild variety of savages and lapsed barbaric stocks of differing languages, who at present are indifferently known as "Moi," or savages.

The Annamese, a late, conquering race, hold the coast and the fertile valleys, and have their capital at Hué, a few miles from the sea, where the Emperor lives in a palace that was formerly forbidden ground, with his chief mandarins, learned in the lore of Confucius. The Chinese are very numerous; by their extraordinary organisation of each community in town and village they maintain a firm hold on commerce, and the Annamese, though disliking them, show them respect,

and politely address them as "uncles." The Annam folk, that number some twelve millions, are the most powerful stock in their old empire. At Nha Trang, below the port of Tourane, where the writer's husband was stationed for three years, working in a Pasteur Institute for tropical diseases, she was in the midst of the Annamese. They are a small, wiry folk, resembling more the Japanese than the Chinese, though they originally came from a province south of China. Both men and women dress alike.

They wear wide cotton trousers, white or coloured, and indigo-blue tunics. Their long, black hair is done up in a knot at the back of the head. The fact that a woman's tunic is a little longer than a man's, and her knot set a little lower on the head, does not at once strike the foreign eye, and it needs some considerable acquaintance with them to distinguish the sexes. Both go barefooted, and use the same tall, conical hat, made of rice-straw or palm leaves. Nha Trang is a



MARKET WOMAN WITH HER BASKET YOKE

Save for perhaps a few male cooks to Europeans, the market at Hué is managed by women. With light-rooted ease they swing about with balanced baskets

Photo. Mme. Vassal

ANNAM, CIVILIZED & SAVAGE

fishing village on a strip of sand between sea and river. Inveterate carelessness is the feature of life there. Always the high tides of October and November wash away some of the huts. The houseless fisher families crowd into the remaining shanties. When the water calms, the lost huts are replaced by others, sited exactly in the old positions, so that they shall float away on the next high tide.

Passing through the village before dawn not a soul was usually to be seen, but with the first ray of sun the householder would come to his door. He would push it outwards and upwards and support it on two sticks, so that it made a little porch or shelter during the day. Standing there he would run his fingers through his hair and retwist his chignon. His toilet was then complete. After him would come children, chickens, pigs, dog, all of whom had slept together during the night, glad to be in the light and air again.

Then the mother would be seen, carefully sweeping free from banana-skins and twigs a central portion of the hut, always avoiding, however, the dark corners inside. She would then convert the camp-bed, whereon all the family had slept during the night, into a little shop for the day. She would set out to the best advantage oranges, bananas, and eggs, bright-coloured stuffs, betel nuts for chewing, and cigarettes, and would thus hope to make a few "cents" during the day.

All Annamese chew the betel nut, which makes a red juice in the mouth, and this they spit out anywhere and everywhere. Their lips become discoloured and swollen, and when, as is often the case, their teeth are also lacquered black to preserve them, the mouth becomes a most repulsive feature.

At the end of the strip of sand was a ferry-boat, which crossed the river from daybreak to sunset. It was generally full of women going to market.



INGENIOUS WAYS OF TRAP-FISHING IN THE WATERS OF ANNAM

Besides possessing perhaps the best sea-fisheries in Asia, the Annamese also have tropic rivers and streams with practically inexhaustible swarms of fresh-water fish. Yet highly ingenious are many of the bamboo traps which the rivermen use daily and abundantly in every reach of warm water

Photo, Mme. Vassal



WAITING THE RETURN OF THE FISHERMEN OF NHA TRANG

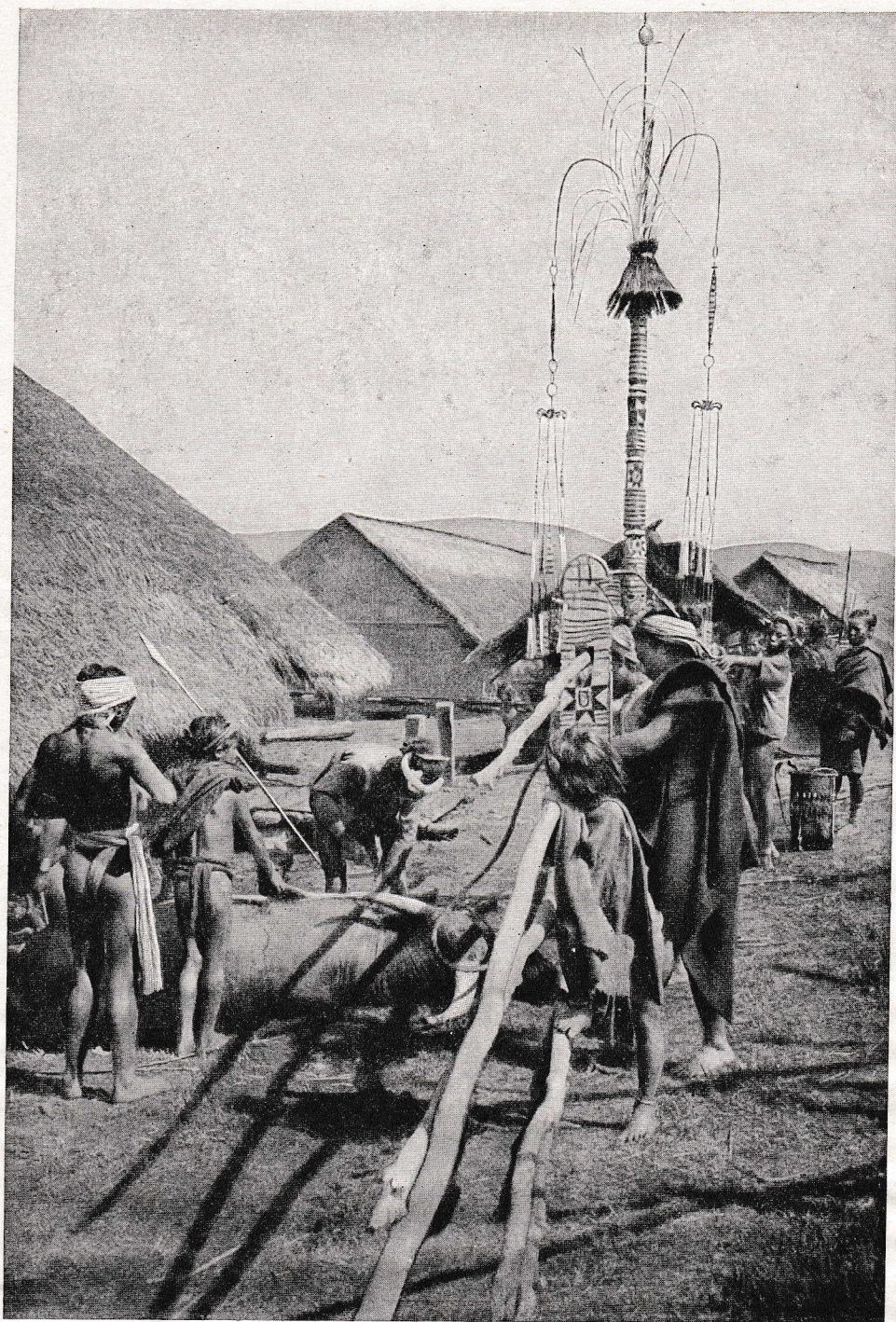
This is the little Annamese fishing village at which the authoress lived. It is early morning, and the sampans will shortly be homing on the sea breeze, with perhaps a big catch for which Annam waters are famous. Meanwhile, the river-nets are being raised

Photo, Mme. Vassal

All you could see was a mere jumble of hats and baskets. The ferryman occasionally made a feeble protest against this overcrowding, but he was always met by such a storm of abuse from the last comers that he invariably subsided. What else could the poor man do in face of such loud voices and extensive vocabularies as the Annamese women possess? Besides, what matter? If the boat should chance to overturn there was no fear of any drowning fatality, for every soul in the fishing village can swim. Woe be to him, though, should he be the cause of the loss of an orange or of a few handfuls of rice.

On landing, a start is made for the market. The women do not walk abreast, but always one behind the other. This does not in the least prevent them carrying on a running conversation, and the foremost woman

chats fluently to the last in the file without ever turning her head or slackening her pace. Annamese women do not walk like Europeans. They trot along on the soles of their feet with a swinging movement. They carry their goods in baskets slung on to a bamboo over their shoulder like a pair of scales. They must be weighted to a nicety. Sometimes you may see a woman, who has been unable to leave her baby at home, carrying it in one of the baskets and balancing it with a sucking pig in the other. Girls before they are married generally stay at home to look after the younger children. The little boys, if not of school age, are sent out to herd the water-buffaloes. These beasts are very dangerous to Europeans in Annam. But a native, even a little naked lad of eight or nine, can manage a whole herd. He has grown up with them and can make



SLAIN BUFFALO DRAGGED TO THE MOI SACRIFICIAL POSTS

Preparatory to a festival, Moi spearmen surround a buffalo and throw spears at it until it dies. The body is drawn to sacrificial posts, in which the guardian spirit of the village dwells, and then, under the sorcerer's eye, the meat is cut in strips, some eaten and the rest devoured later at the roaring, revelling feast. The Moi have no notion of thrift, and none of the meat is saved for hard times

Photo, Mme. Vassal



ELEPHANT PRESENTATION DANCE AT THE FESTIVITY OF THE TÊT

The Têt, or New Year's Feast, is the most important and lasts twelve days. In one of the ceremonies at Nha Trang, the great elephant of the mandarin of the province enters the public square with a party of dancing girls, and, like them, performs the presentation dance, kneeling, touching the ground, kneeling again, and doing all the salutations

Photo, Mme. Vassal

ANNAM, CIVILIZED & SAVAGE

them do as he will with his shrill little voice and whacks from his little cane. It is very amusing to see these children bringing back the buffaloes across the river in the evening. They climb on to their backs by means of their tails, and, standing upright, drive the whole herd from this elevated position.

The men are mostly occupied in the rice fields. In the rainy season, when the fields are full of water, they plough them with the help of the buffaloes. They then stand on the harrow, which is just beneath the water, balancing themselves by means of the tails of their buffaloes.

The rice, meanwhile, has been sown in a corner of the field. As soon as the young shoots appear above the water they are planted out in the fields. This work is done by the women. You see a whole line of them right across the field. They stand, with their trousers rolled up as high as they will go, nearly up to their knees in warm slush, pushing the green shoots into the soft mud.

The occupations of the people differ according to their rank. There is no permanent aristocracy in Annam except in the royal family. Titles are not hereditary. A family loses one degree with every generation, so that if men do nothing to gain honour by personal effort the title soon becomes extinct. Most titles and government posts are won by special examinations. Unfortunately, the candidates study the ancient Chinese characters and the maxims of Confucius rather than modern science and its achievements. Progress is slow.

They make a god of learning. Thus a man reclaiming waste land and turning it into rice fields may gain a title, but he never enjoys the esteem of the people so much as one who has gained the same honour by the study of ancient scripts. There is a good communal school in every village throughout the country, and the boys are, perhaps, never so happy as when running to school.

Annam, unlike Tongking and Cochin China, is only a Protectorate, and the



THE WAY THEY BUILD HOUSES ON THE SHORE OF ANNAM

On this sea-reach the high tide every year sweeps away the overcrowded fishers' cabins, and every year the cabins are rebuilt on the old sites. As seen, they have merely a light framework of bamboo canes, into which are woven thinner canes, with a thatch for roofing. Rainproof airiness is all that is required in the moist heat of the Annam shore

Photo Mme. Vassal



MOI CHIEF'S HOUSE RAISED ON TREE-TRUNKS AGAINST TIGERS

This is the main house in a hamlet found in the expedition in which Mme. and Dr. Vassal took part. The remote jungle folk build on dry hills against the fever-spreading valley gnats, and they lift their dwelling on tree-trunks and poles, to prevent tigers clawing through roof or bamboo walls. At night the ladder is removed and the dwelling is secure from attack.

Photo, Mme. Vassal

native governors still have a great deal of authority, receiving their orders direct from the Ministers at Hué. There are three religions—Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism. But the Annamese will worship in one temple just as soon as in another, the distance or pecuniary advantage alone guiding him in his choice. Then, too, the religions intermingle greatly, and the deities of all three religions may frequently be found on one altar. The people also believe in a multitude of good and evil spirits.

There are the spirits of the air, of the sea, and of the rice fields, besides those appertaining to the articular trade in which a man may be engaged. Shrines are raised to these spirits and offerings are made in them.

Round Nha Trang a great many shrines have been built to the tiger. The tiger is still taking toll of the population, and has come to be regarded as a god. The Annamese never think of mentioning him without his title—"Ong Kop" (my lord tiger). It has sometimes happened

ANNAM, CIVILIZED & SAVAGE

that when a European has trapped a tiger, the natives on discovering his august presence in the morning have collected round the trap, begged him to forgive the insult which he has received, made a great tam-tam with their clapping instruments, and let him go. In such circumstances it is useless to ask the Annamese to act as beaters in a tiger hunt. They fear that he would take his revenge not only on them but on the whole of their village.



MALAY TYPE OF TURBANED CHAM WOMAN

This is one of the strange, Moslemised race of Sumatra Malays, that helped the Brahmin invaders of Cochin China to build an empire on the Mekong River

Photo, Mme. Vassal

The imitative Annamese lives on an attenuated Chinese culture. The faith which really guides his everyday life is ancestor worship. This faith teaches him respect for old age and devotion to his children. It is the oldest man in the home who rules it. Nothing is done without his consent. A man will

take advice from his mother rather than from his wife. This faith also accounts for the custom of polygamy, for it is incumbent on a man to have a son, who shall do for him what he has done for his father, and who will carry on the rites of his ancestors. A rich man will often have several wives, but a poor man only one unless there is no son.

In Annam the tombs of the ancestor-worshippers are of stone and beautifully sculptured. A man will live with his family all his life in some wooden hut with a thatched roof and mud floor, but when he dies he must have a stone tomb. What is fit for the living is not worthy of the dead.

The Têt, which is the name of the Annamese New Year, is the greatest fête in the calendar. For a week or ten days the Annamese engage in all kinds of festivities. There are races on land, and sports on the water. The chief feature of the Têt is the procession of the dragon. The dragon is a many-hued monster often about thirty yards long. It is borne by men inside it who at night carry torches so that the markings on the skin are lighted up. It is a most terrifying-looking object with fire spurting from its eyes, mouth, and nostrils, but it sends the crowd into ecstasies of enthusiasm.

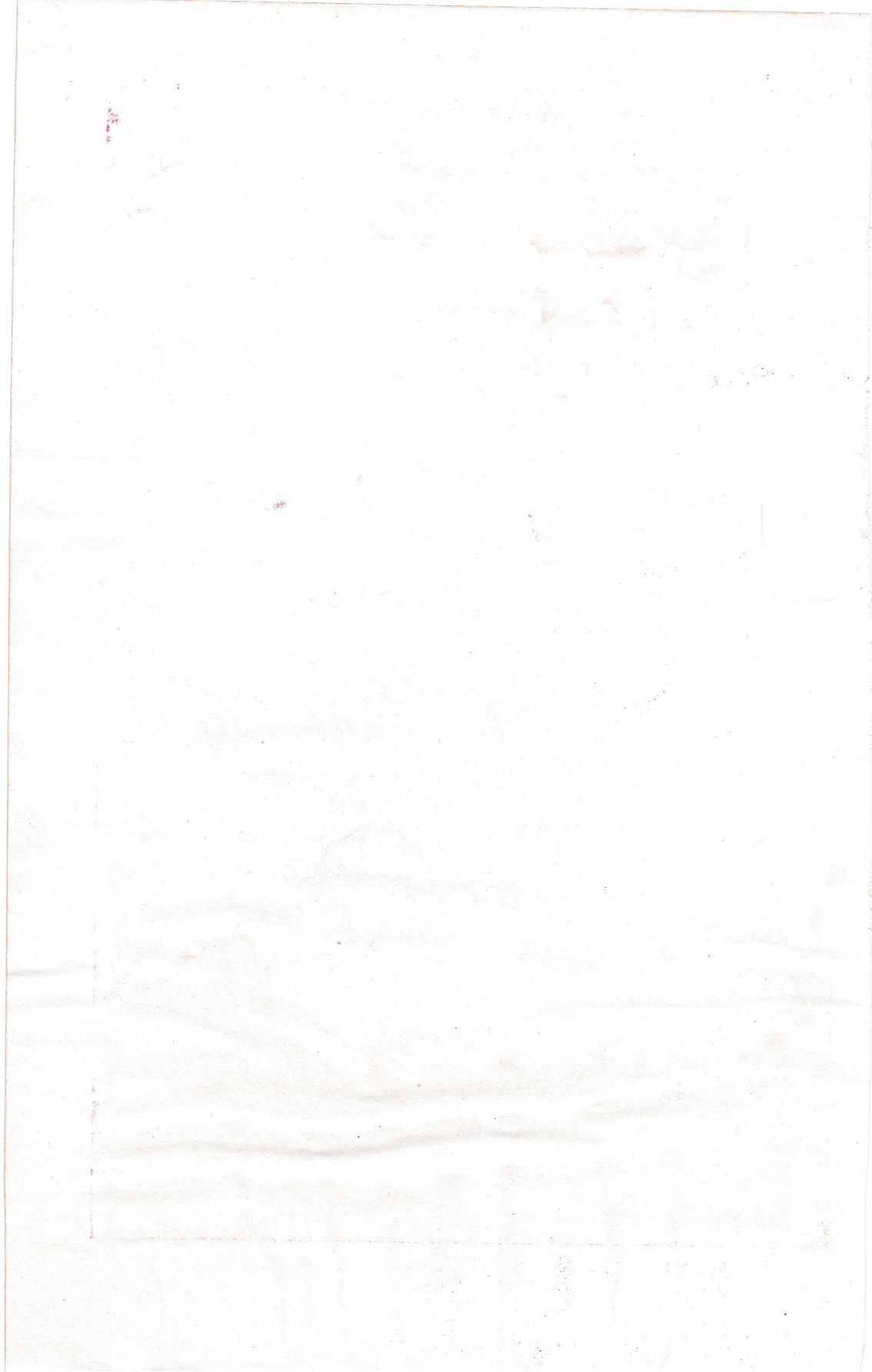
Acting is also indulged in. There are well-known tragedies and comedies in

Annamese, and it is during the Têt that one can be sure of good representations. Genuine dramas are, however, less frequent than pantomimic farces. These resolve themselves into queer contortions of the hands, arms, feet, and spreading out of the toes, accompanied by blood-curdling shrieks and quick,



ANNAM : THE EMPEROR ON HIS THRONE OF GOLD

As the Son of Heaven, he is dressed in his ritual robes and holds in his hands the sacred "rule," a tablet of wood. Chinese influence is seen in the Imperial garb and the great dragon design behind the throne



ANNAM, CIVILIZED & SAVAGE

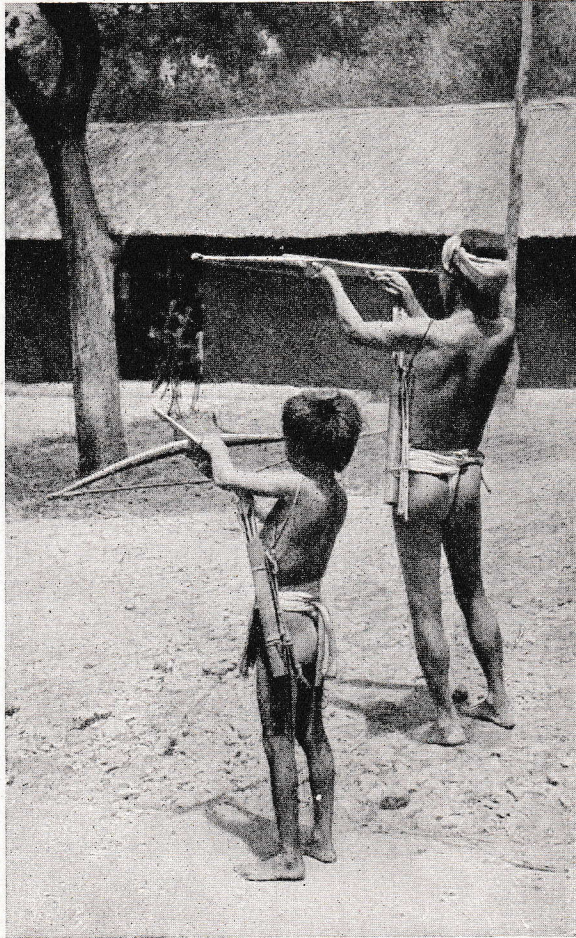
whirling movements. The characters consist of a man, a woman, a child, a cock, a tiger, etc. The pieces last two or three days, the actors only stopping for their meals. A good audience is never wanting. The natives do not applaud by clapping hands, but anyone in the audience wishing to show his appreciation of any particular feat rushes up to a gong placed for the purpose near the stage and bangs it. Needless to say, the gong is hardly ever at rest.

In strange contrast to all the Chinese customs of the Annamese are the Hindu and Arab ways of life of the old, broken race of Chams, who still scantily inhabit the southern province of the land they once conquered. They are a courteous people, with somewhat of a European outline of face, and skin of a dark brown or reddish brown, such as Europeans acquire after a long stay in the tropics. They are Malays, with more than the usual dose of Indo-European blood.

The Chams of Annam are now divided into families that hold by Mahomet, and those that hold by Siva. But they are all easy-going. The Brahmins admit "Lord Allah" into their pantheon, and the Moslems in turn keep to many strange Hindu practices. The priests of the two faiths attend each other's ceremonies, and both recognize the national prophetesses. The Cham prophetess is the crown of the system of woman's superiority, that begins with giving girls the duty of proposing marriage.

This is the reason why Cham maids are so forward. They are the choosers and not the chosen. They select the young man they wish to marry, and send their parents, with two cakes and some chewing betel, to the shy creature.

He is spared words, having only to taste a cake as a sign he is willing to become engaged. The bold maid has then to prove that she can become a mother, and the couple live together until children are born. In fact, the offspring are sometimes old enough to take part



SAVAGE TEACHING HIS SON ARCHERY

At early age Moi boys use bows and arrows to bring down game. So soon as they are proficient, they are allowed to use, in hunting for food, poisoned arrows like the men

Photo, Mme. Vassal

in the marriage ceremony. The feature of this is that the bride enters a hut and the bridegroom stands outside and offers gifts of a rice-field, a plough, oxen, and jewelry. He then sends in two friends who beg her to marry him.

She makes a good wife, and adultery is rare and severely punished. On the



ANNAMESE PIECEMEAL WAY OF REAPING AND THRESHING RICE

Having carried their large, fantastic basket into the paddy field, the men cut a small sheaf, take it to the basket, and thresh it, then walk away to cut another handful. It is a striking example of Oriental industry without brains, or, rather of smallholders without capital for machinery. If wheat were harvested in this way, what would bread cost?

Photo, Agence Economique de l'Indo-Chine

other hand, divorce is easy. The woman's right to choose her husband is enlarged by the privilege of getting rid of him at will, or changing him for another man. In this case she keeps the family hut and most of the property. The children take her name, follow her religion, and always remain her property. Inheritance descends through the women—the men do not count.

The girls are, on the whole, good-looking, with well-developed figures and

charming grace of movement. Their usual dress is a dark green bodice, a white skirt, often striped red or green, and a kind of turban head-dress. Their taste for jewelry is restrained to a gold or silver button in the ear. The wearing of bracelets is a mark of a temporary vow of chastity. The men, who are of vigorous build and some five and a half feet in height, wear a skirt and a very long robe, with a turban, sometimes replaced by a kerchief.

ANNAM, CIVILIZED & SAVAGE

Instead of pockets, they have two purses hanging from a girdle.

In spite of their bodily strength and such good craftsmanship as they care to show in the few trades they follow, they are a listless, hopeless race. Their grand old, gorgeous temples and cities in the medieval Hindu style, with a wealth of sculpture and decoration, show what height of achievement they could reach, as also do their great road systems, all lost in tens of thousands of square miles of jungle. The Hindu sect still worships Siva, with a solemn, decent devotion to the phallic symbols associated with that idol; but neither this, nor the remarkable privilege given to the women, increases the breeding power of the race. In the short period they have been under French observation, their numbers seem rather to have lessened than to have grown.

But the romance of their ancient prophetesses as related to us deserves

immortality. These witch girls are perhaps the last, Far Eastern, representatives of the "weird sisters" of Scotland, and the druidesses of Ireland and Wales. They enter the order usually at the age of twenty, and observe the vow of lifelong chastity. Each is selected by an elder "princess," who feels she is growing old and must train a successor to perform the sacred duties. Under the Cham Empire such duties are said to have been carried out by Indo-European princesses of the blood royal who filled the religious offices.

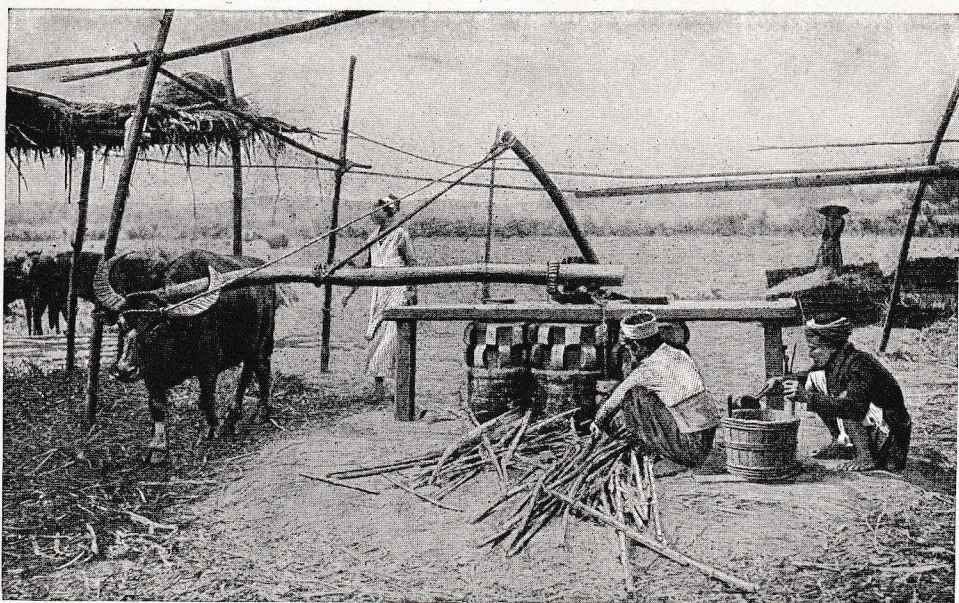
Princesses are now made by adoption. The chosen novice, who, if a young married woman, must at once leave her husband, receives the name of "Happiness of the Human Race," and falls on her knees before her spiritual mother in dutiful submission. The older woman takes off her girdle, binds it round the head of the novice, gives her three grains of rice with salt to eat, and



REAPING ANNAM'S JUNGLE-LIKE HARVEST OF SUGAR-CANE

Introduced into the country by the Hindu Chams, the sugar-cane grows most luxuriantly in the moist, hot climate of Annam. Some ten crops can be reaped from one planting, but harvesting is a slow, laborious affair, as the canes have to be cut, one by one, with a knife

Photo, Agence Economique de l'Indo-Chine



OLD-FASHIONED WOODEN CANE-MILL WORKED BY A BUFFALO

This is the primitive sugar-cane mill, invented more than two thousand years ago. While a man inserts the cane, the buffalo turns two hardwood rollers against a third roller, geared to move in the opposite direction. The principle is the same as that of modern mills



SIMPLE ORIENTAL WAY OF CLARIFYING CANE-JUICE

The Annamese peasant is lading the raw juice into large copper pans, where it is mixed with ashes, clay, lime, or other refining material, and heated so that the impurities sink, leaving the syrup on top. It is a crude method, producing only crude sugar

Photos. Agence Economique de l'Indo-Chine



POURING THE SYRUP INTO EARTHENWARE POTS FOR CRYSTALLISATION

When the juice has been heated and evaporated for some three hours, the thickened liquid begins to show sugar crystals on its surface. It is then poured into cooling earthenware vases, where the sugar crystallises out, amid the molasses, which are drained off



EXPOSING THE WET SUGAR TO THE DRYING TROPIC SUNSHINE

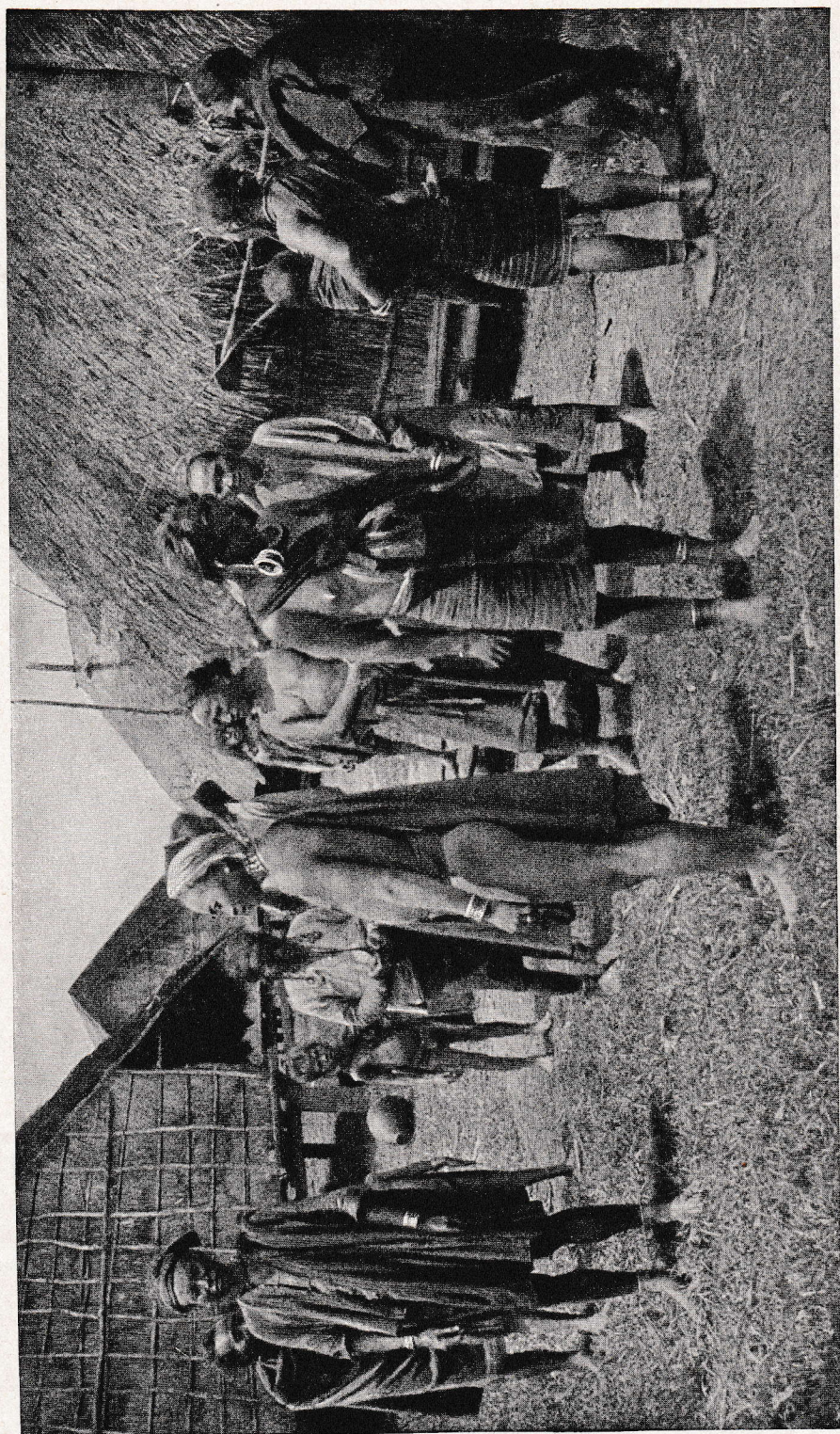
In modern sugar-making the wet sugar undergoes many refining processes, but as the Annamese peasantry are content with a rough product, their system of manufacture is completed by standing the moist sugar loaves upon an outdoor table, to dry in the hot sun

Photos, Agence Economique de l'Indo-Chine



PRIMITIVE FOREST OF WILD MOI WITH ALL THE INHABITANTS ARRAYED IN FULL DRESS

Here we have complete one of the little, wandering jungle tribes of the backlands of Annam. This is the centre of the village, and the big house of bamboo-wattled walls which we see is the communal rice granary; nearby is the hut for marriageable lads, awaiting the ceremony of initiation into manhood. Save for loin-cloth or skirt, dress consists of copper and brass ornaments, with large head or metal necklaces



MOI VILLAGE OF DANKIA, SIXTY-TWO MILES DISTANT FROM THE NEAREST ANNAMESE SETTLEMENT

With its tortuous palisades and maze of bamboo-and-thatch cabins, Dankia holds the Moi, without winning him to civilised life. He does not, as usual, shift to fresh ground and there rebuild; but the French Government farmers on the plateau have still to woo him to a settled life, and make him a prosperous example to other tribesmen of the wandering, half-famished kind. Notice the long-eared woman in foreground

Photo, Mme. Vassal

ANNAM, CIVILIZED & SAVAGE

throws her into a trance. This seems to be done by hypnotism and not by drugs, for the sleeper dreams she has ascended to the moon to be consecrated by the Heavenly Princess, and taught all the secrets of men and the mysteries of life.

During this ceremony there is a holy dance with scarlet scarf and fan, and a black kid is killed as sacrifice, and eagle-wood incense burnt by the folk of the Hindu sect. Among the Moslems, the old woman and the girl perform the rites alone in a moonlit forest, by an ant-hill. The novice, stripped naked, takes a sword, and splits a cock with it from head to tail. Then, by a weird dance and incantation, she must join the severed halves together, and make the cock

crow. This is, of course, merely a wilder affair of hypnotic suggestion on the part of the old woman. The people have the nervous Malay temperament, and there can be no doubt that practice in the use of hypnotic power is an important element in the year's training of the young candidate.

At the end of the year the "Happiness of the Human Race" brings to the shrine of the Heavenly Princess a basket of offerings, upon which she lights two candles. All the folk who attended the first ceremony should be present. Only if the candles burn bright and clear is the candidate assured of divine acceptance. Should a candle show a smoky flame, or go out, she is unfitted



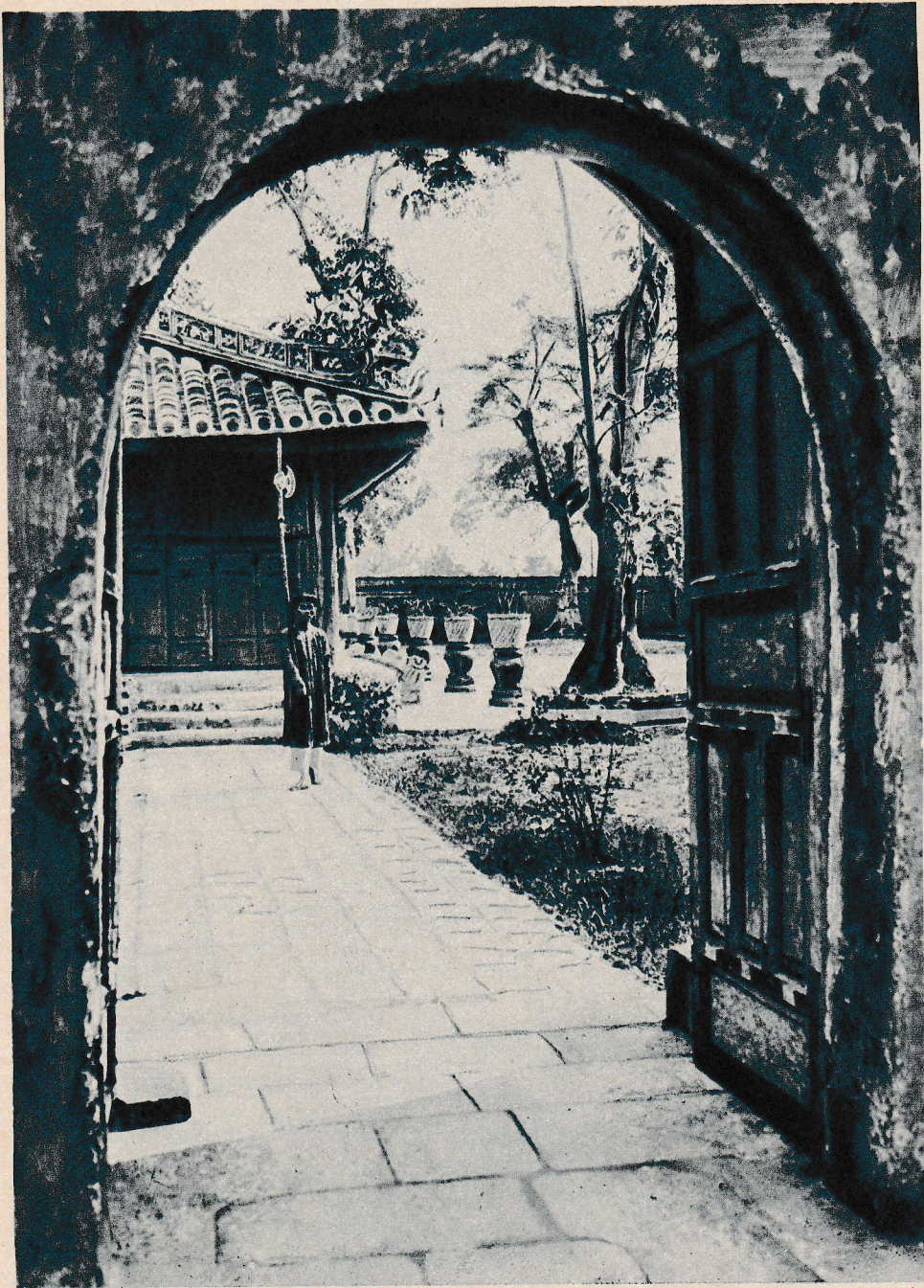
OPEN-AIR EVENING DINNER OF ANNAMESE VILLAGE FOLK.

At evening the big rice-pot is brought from the fire, and each little rice-bowl filled. In other bowls are placed salads, bits of fish and roasted pork, with sauces. Each guest has a rice-bowl, and picks out, neatly with chopstick, from the free bowls of savouries on the ground table, the delicacies that flavour the plain meal of boiled rice.

Photo. Mme. Vassal

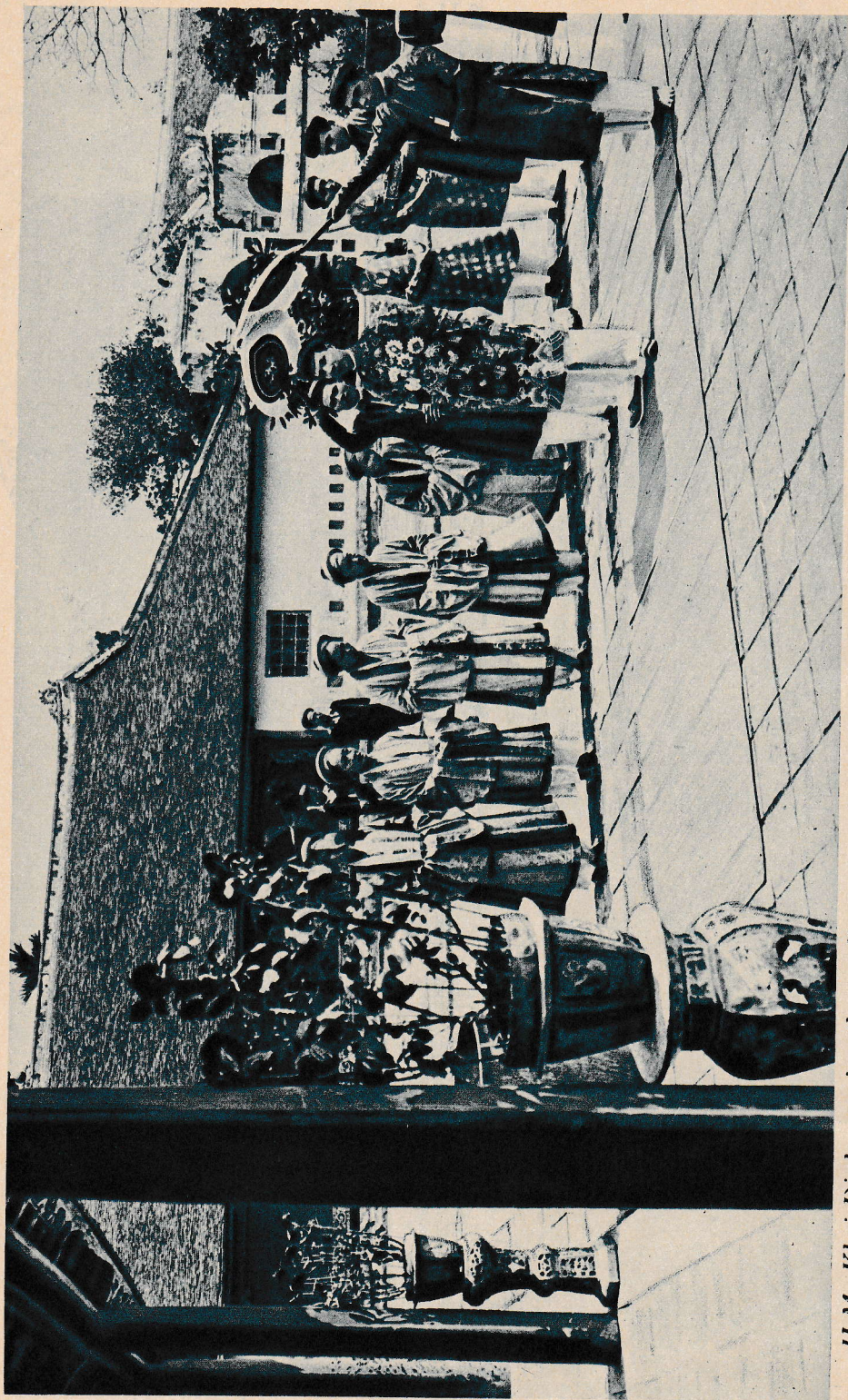
ANNAM CONTRASTS

The Palace & The Wild



The Imperial palace at Hué is famed for its architectural grace. Here is an alluring glimpse of one of the strictly guarded pagodas

Photos (except page 148), Agence de l'Indo-Chine



H.M. Khai-Dinh crossing the sunlit courtyard of his palace, obsequiously attended by fan-bearers and his private secretary. The five white-robed old men alined along the carpeted footway are palace eunuchs



Western neatness distinguishes the appointments of the private cabinet where the Emperor transacts business with his secretaries



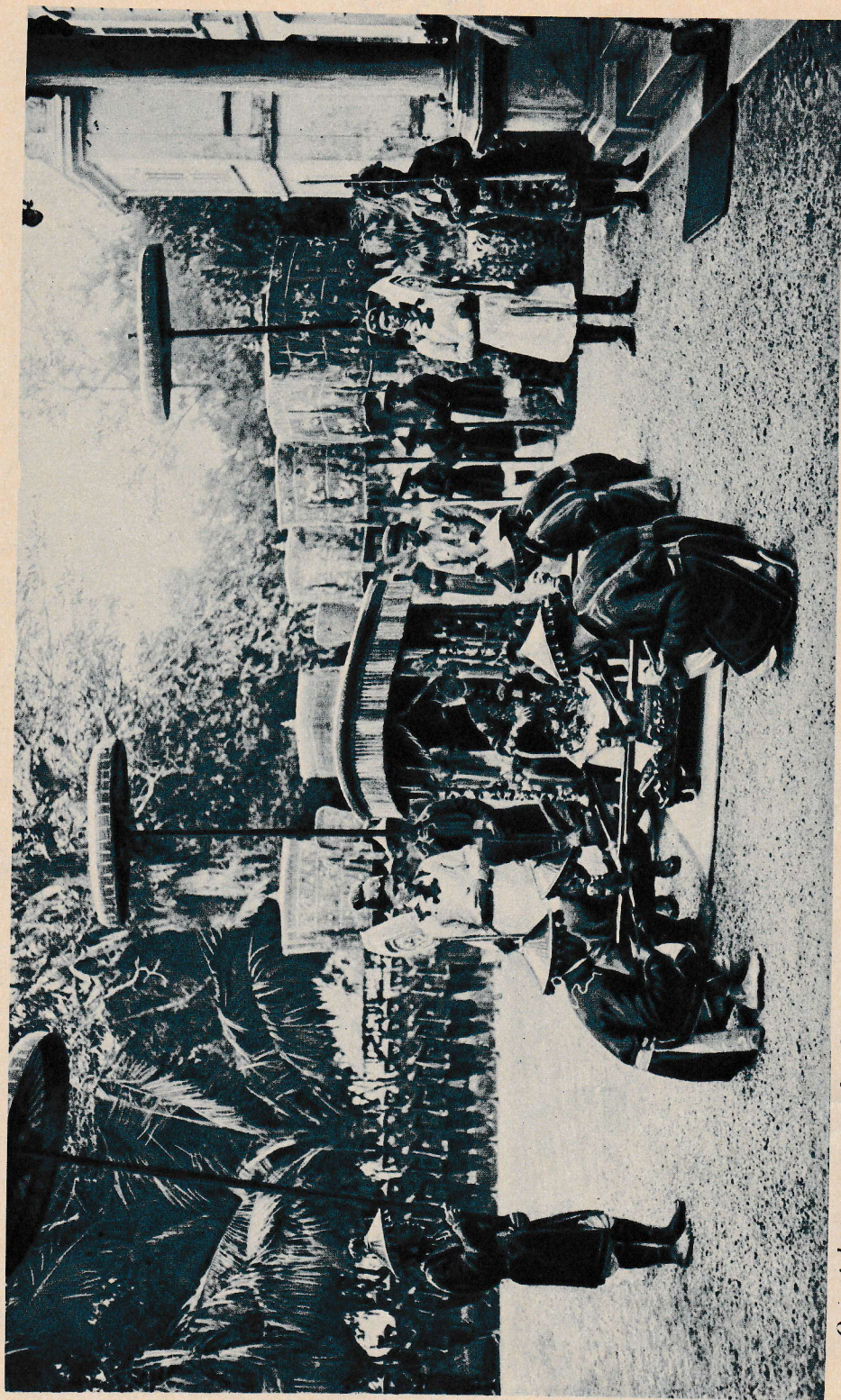
An Eastern touch is supplied by the brush dipped in red paint with which his Majesty affixes his signature to State documents



The Emperor as Commander-in-Chief of the Army. Gorgeously jewelled hat and belt are features of the magnificent full-dress uniform



Almost as picturesque is the informal garb of ample trousers and loose surcoat in which his Majesty idles in his palm-girt garden



Oriental pomp attends the sovereign when paying a ceremonial visit to the French Resident-Superior, the virtual ruler of the Empire. On these occasions he travels in a gala palanquin borne by eight men



Here is the Emperor enthroned in richly lacquered and embroidered state between the Four Columns of the Kingdom—Justice and Education on his right, the Treasury and Public Works on his left



Shooting waterfowl from a punt is a favourite recreation of H.M. Khai-Dinh. Fine sport is obtainable on the tree-fringed, reedy, lotus-covered lakes in the immediate neighbourhood of the Imperial palace



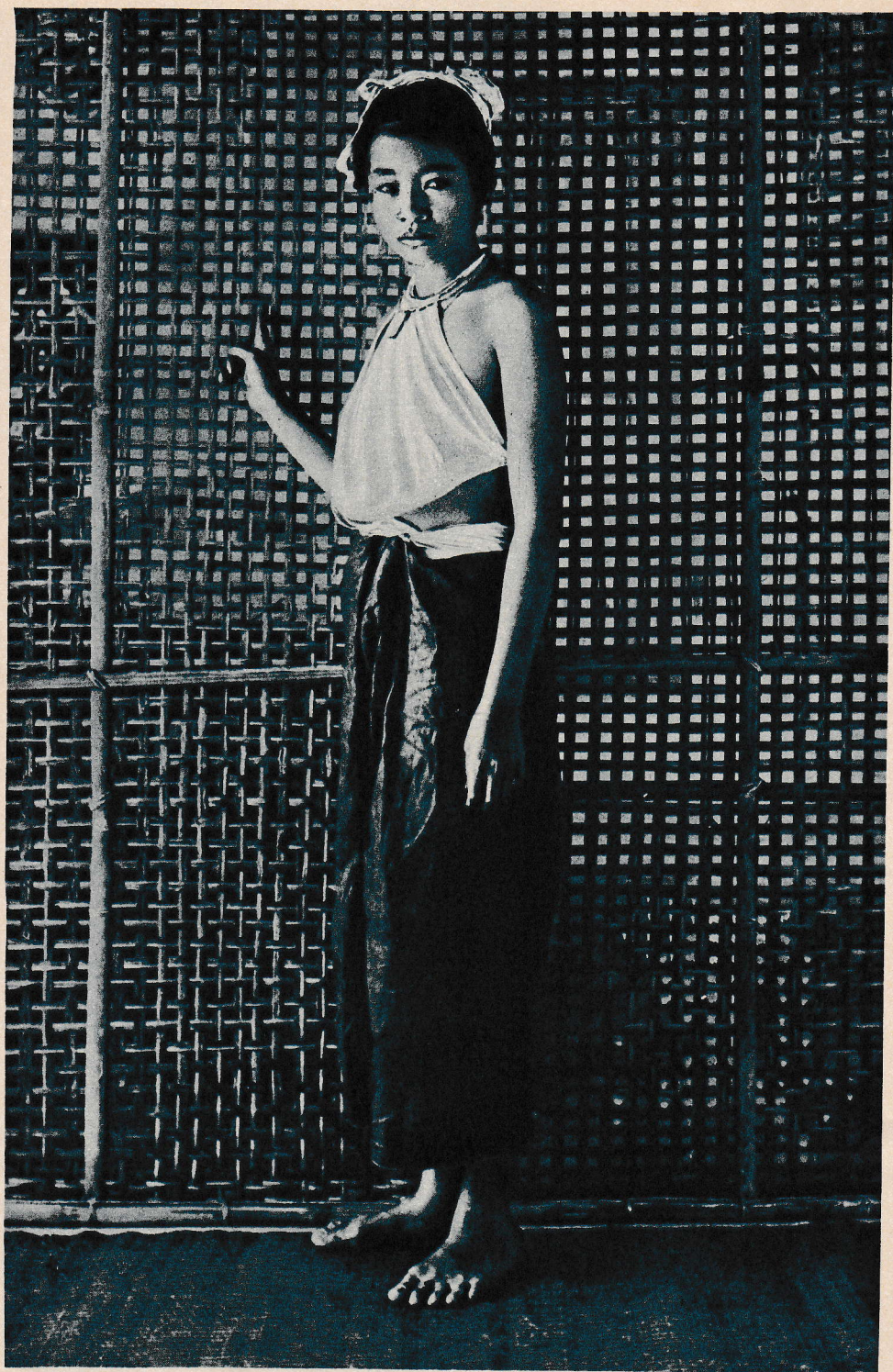
The Moi—the word is Annamese for savage—include the lowest tribes in all Annam. Here a party of women is shown refreshing themselves on the march with draughts from their clumsy drinking-gourds



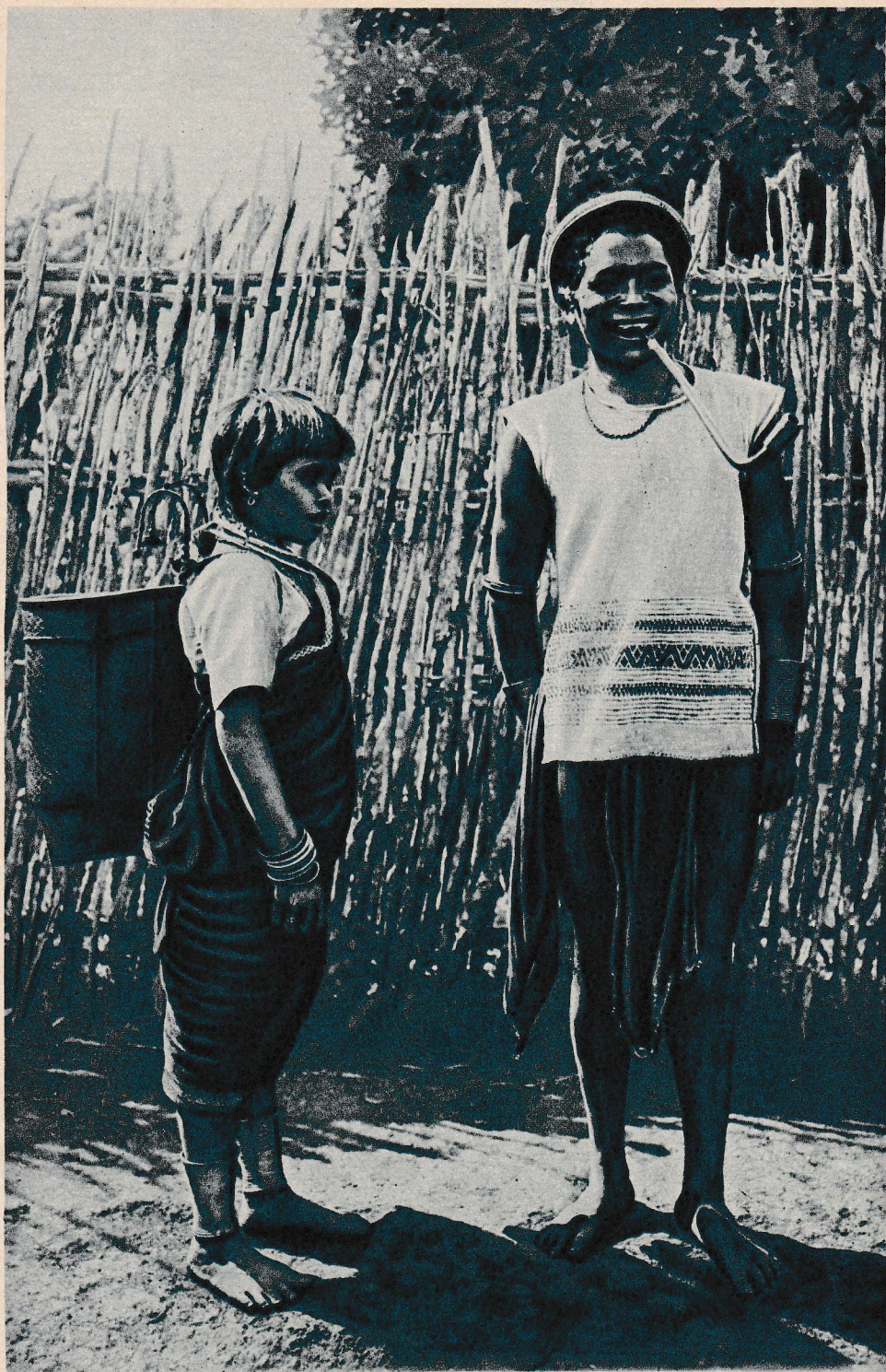
The gossip seems to interest baby, too ! All the Annamese are devoted to their children, whose early years at any rate are very happy



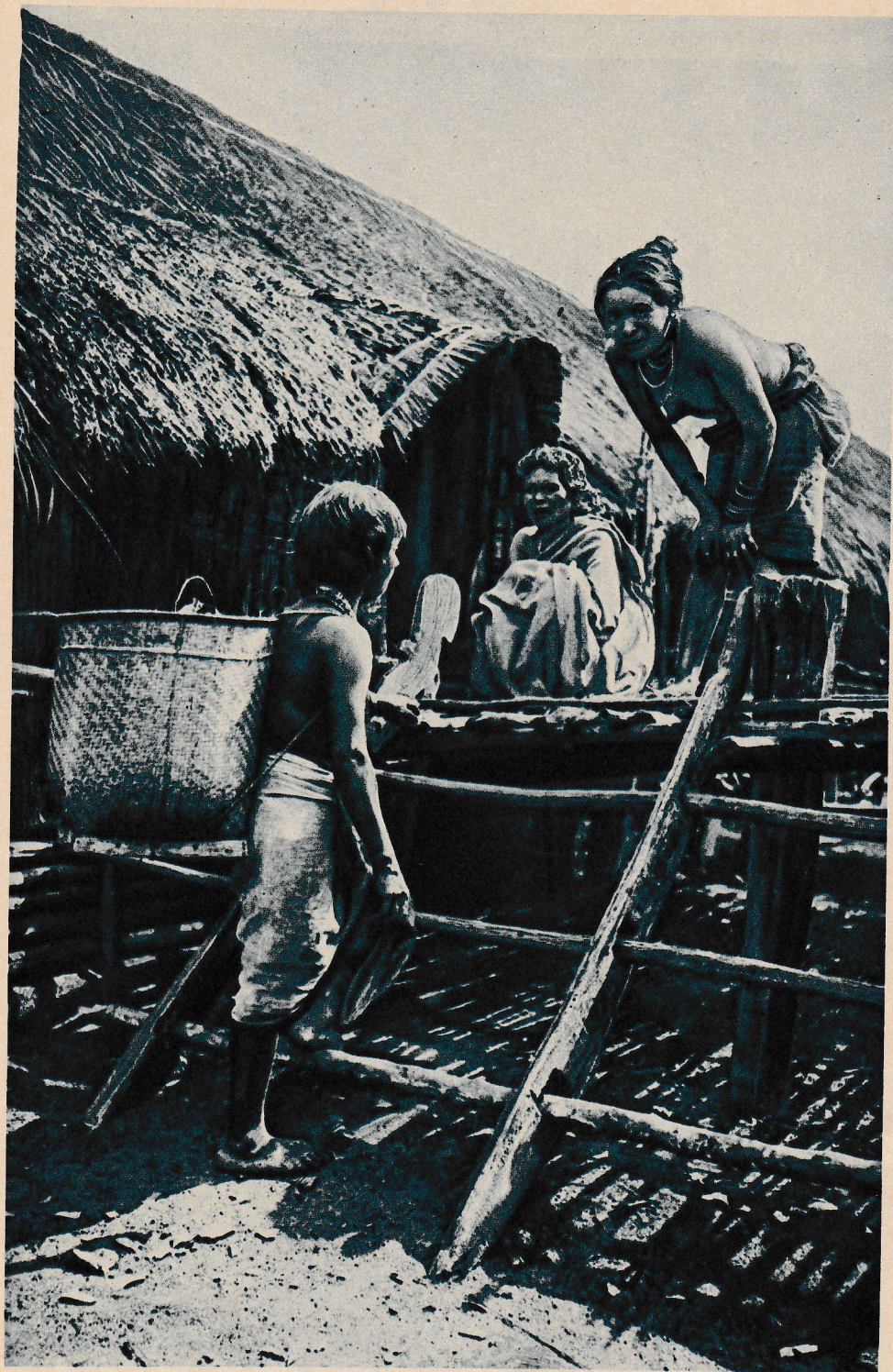
Young Cham dandies wear almost the same clothes as their sisters, with armlets and necklets for decoration. The umbrella is sheer vanity



Indoors, Annamese women wear loose cotton trousers and a small square fichu tied to neck and waist, leaving the back and arms bare



A Moï couple inside the village palisade. When not smoking his quaint brass pipe, the man will stick it upright in his hair



There are no streets in a Moi village. The scattered, thatch-roofed cabins are built on stakes, a hole in the thatch their only door



A Moi cabin has but one room; with, at the top of the ladder, an outside platform where naked children squat, fearless of a fall



This is the entrance to the Pagoda of the Marble Mountain, near Tourane. Note the solemn bonze descending the winding staircase



WILD MOI WOMEN'S EAR LOBES IN DANGLING DEGREES OF BEAUTY

A jungle mother's first duty is to pierce her daughter's ears, and enlarge the holes with wooden plugs of increasing thickness. She next uses heavy rings to pull the lobes down towards the shoulders. If the flesh ribbons break, the girl becomes too ugly to marry. If the weighted lobes promise to reach the bosom, the maid attains supreme loveliness

Photo, Mme. Vassal

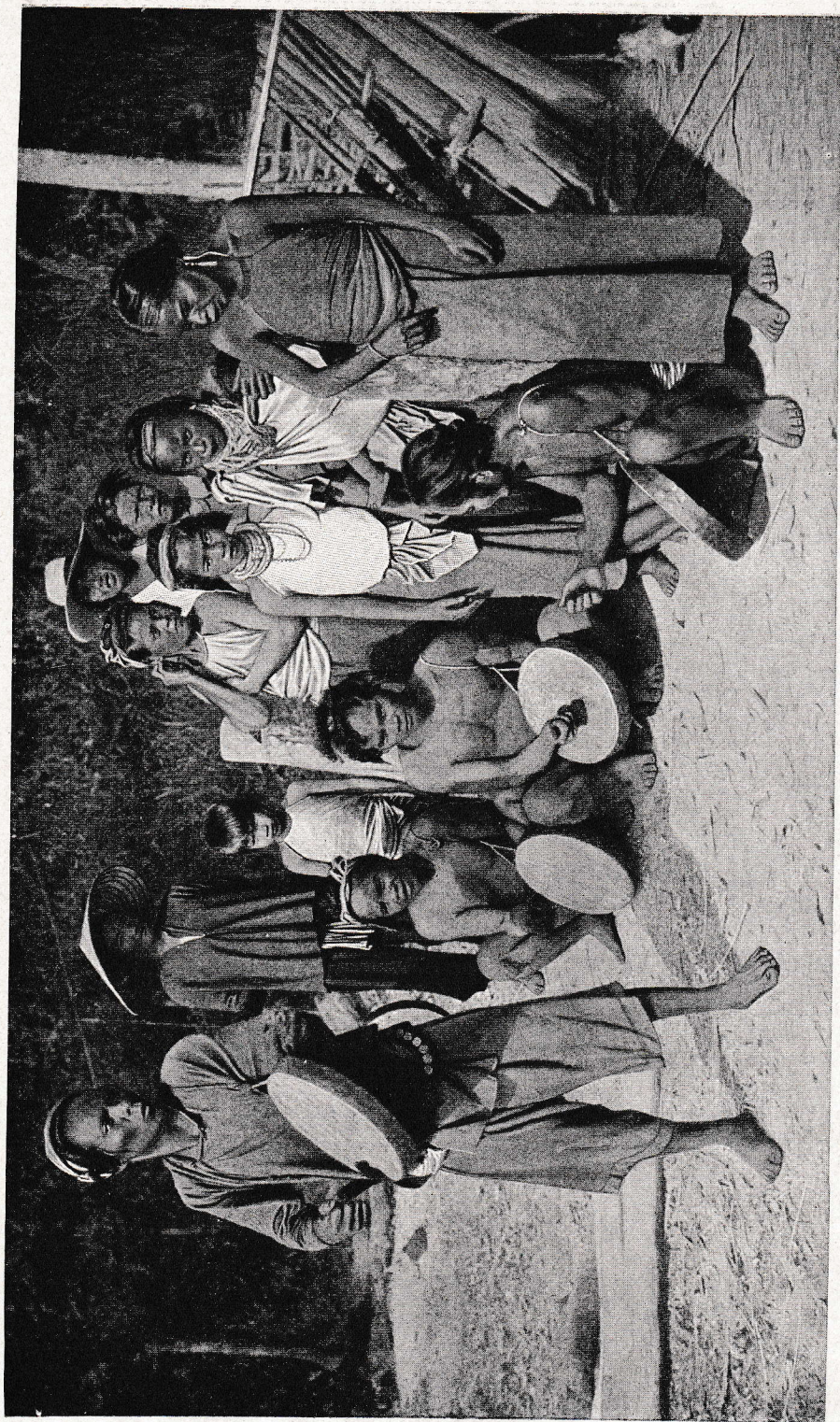
for office. The perfected young princess has a drummer who recites the liturgical phrases in exorcisms, incantations, and divination, and the lady goes into transports, foretells the future, and drives away evil spirits from the people. Deep is the awe and profound the reverence she inspires. Among her secretive folk her personal power can hardly be estimated, but it is the writer's opinion that the prophetesses could rouse the people more effectively than any men. They dress either in white, or in black and red.

The Chams have one serious vice. They are the most expert of poisoners, and have drugs with slow action but certain results, which they are suspected of using against French officials when angry with them. They seem to have learnt their murderous skill from their savage neighbours, the Moi.

The Moi are mainly very early settlers of the Indonesian type, and are

a mixture of primitive Indian and Southern Mongolian, with fresh infusions of Hindu, Malay, and Tibetan blood. Their colour ranges from mahogany, wax, and dead-leaf tints, and some tribes have in the past risen to a remarkable stage of civilization. They have protected themselves against the Annamese by the use of their deadly poisons, and by retiring to jungles, in which they manage to survive the fevers that kill all invading races, including the modern French. The writer lived for eight weeks among one branch of Moi on the Langbian Plateau. It stands in South Annam, fifteen thousand feet above the sea. In a journey, ninety miles from the nearest Annam village, we passed through tropic jungle, rocks, and cool pine-forests, into a large stretch of downland country of undulating meadows and fresh air.

Beyond the tableland was the territory where the King of Fire, with the sacred



SAVAGE MOI PLANTATION HANDS GIVING A CONCERT TO THEIR NEW ANNAMESE FRIENDS

This is a remarkable scene on the sugar plantation of a French colonist. He has managed to engage some of the savage Moi of the jungle, who are more used to raid the civilised Annamese than to work with them. The leading tribesman, however, has adopted the Annamese costume, and to the stirring barbaric music of songs in different tones he is singing in his language some wild ballad of *Annamese* life.



MARCHING BAND OF MOÏ TRIBESMEN PILED WITH FOOD AND KIT, YET READY FOR INSTANT DEFENCE

In the great baskets rice, cooking pots, and dried fish are piled, with other articles, all needing strong roping. The Moï dare not use a hand to his burden. All he can do is to fix a stick-prop behind. In travelling through strange land both hands must be free to handle spear or seize bow and arrow. Yet thus loaded and trammelled, the sinewy Moï can tramp rough jungle ways until evening

Photo, Mme. Vassal



NHA TRANG FERRY AND ITS LOAD OF QUAINT-HATTED WOMEN

Fisher families of Nha Trang live on a sandbank, and from dawn to dusk the women ferry over to the mainland market. Sometimes the overcrowded boat upsets, but without loss of life, for the fisher-women swim like fishes. But there is trouble over lost goods!

Photo, Mme. Vassal

sword, and the King of Water, with his magic rattan, possess the talismans of fallen empires of the Cham and the Cambodians. Both are said to have been gained by treachery. If the King of Fire draws the enchanted sword from the scabbard, the sun goes out; if the King of Water does something to his rattan, mankind is drowned. Both the Cham and Cambodian armies tried of old to recover the lost instruments of magic, but failed.

In our first visits there all the natives fled and hid themselves. But so soon as the Moi discovered I was only a woman, the children took sugar from my hand, and I was able to enter their huts. These are quite dark inside, sooty, and full of smoke. Fires are always burning, and there are no windows or chimneys. The fire and smoke are a remedy against flies and mosquitoes. Entering one dim

hut I stumbled over wicker trays, tools, bows and arrows strewn on the floor, and reached a group of men and women, and squatted down among them by the fire. Most of the women had a baby in their arms. They were smoking, passing pipes one to another. One man passed his pipe to me.

In another village the women took me to an empty hut and examined my hands, feet, and hair, and compared these with their own. They thought little of my ears. In childhood Moi girls have the lobes of their ears pierced by a thin bamboo. Thicker and thicker bamboos are used, until the hole is as large as the top of a cup, and the skin is stretched to breaking-point. Then they take out this wedge of wood, and place there instead heavy metal earrings, which reach down over the chest. When a Moi woman runs she holds these



NHA TRANG'S FISHING FLEET OF KEEL-LESS SAMPANS

These sampans have no keels, but the Annamese skilfully work them out on the South China Sea by means of huge rudders. They go out at night with the land wind, fish in the darkness, and return in the morning with the sea breeze

Photo Mme. Vassal

earrings against herself, not out of fear for her earrings, which was my first thought, but for her ears. And it is no unreasonable fear, for often the lobes do break, and you see the older women with two thin pieces of skin hanging down on either side of their faces.

The men do not deform their ears in this way, but many of them grind down their front teeth to the gums. It is done with pumice stone, and is a very painful operation, lasting some days. However, a youth rarely shrinks from it, because from that time forward he is considered no longer a boy but a man.

The inhabitants of the village had kept at a distance while we were having dinner, but when we retired for the night they surrounded the hut and peeped in through cracks in the wall of bamboo. They stood about four deep round the

hut. Those who were near the biggest cracks would no more have thought of giving up their places than a man who has a seat in the front row of the pit. I did not heed when I was once in bed. They stood there chattering all night, and we found them in exactly the same position in the morning.

A rather gruesome ceremony which takes place in the villages round the plateau is a buffalo sacrifice. This is performed when an epidemic is rife or some other misfortune has overtaken the village. The buffalo is attached the night before to a highly ornamented stake. In the morning, when the sun has risen to a certain height above the horizon, the chief of the village, dressed for the occasion in Annamese costume, makes an oration in front of the buffalo to the assembled village. At a certain



MOÏ WOMEN AND CHILDREN BY THEIR BARE HIGHLAND SHANTY

This is only a fragment of the families that nightly crowd into the single, smoky hut for protection against fever mosquitoes. Characteristic of the race are the scanty clothing of home-woven cotton and the abundance of brass and glass jewelry, with the brittle rice-basins of sun-baked clay, the wicker-work jar, and the fine examples of primitive, domestic copperwork.

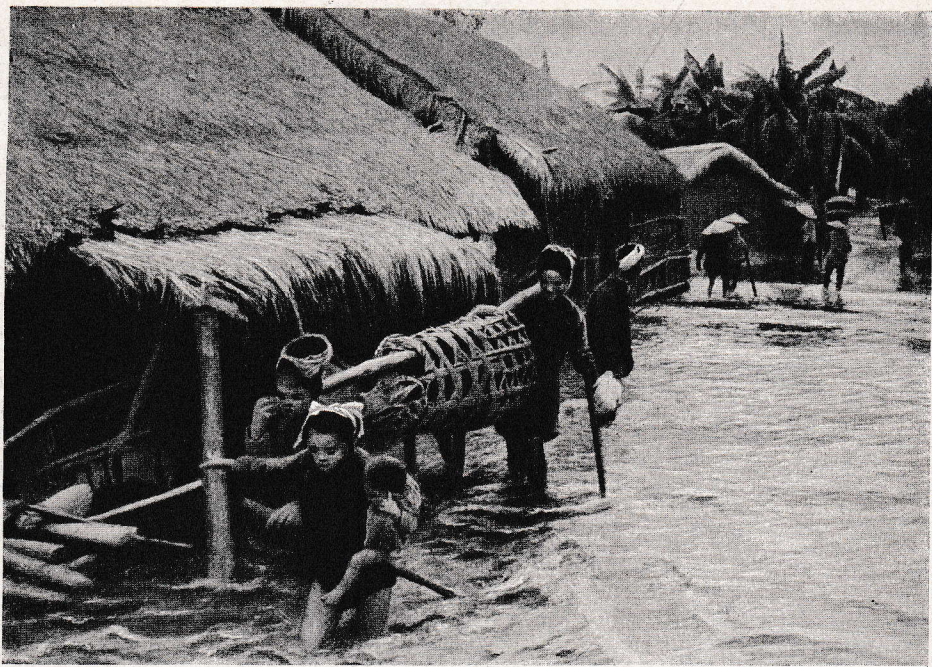
Photo, Mme. Vassal



WILD AND UNRULY COWBOYS OF THE LANGBIAN RANCHES

These savage Moi tribesmen are excellent cowboys. They delight in cattle, and will face and master any bull. But a month is the longest period for which they will serve. Even then they have to be conscripted, although it is hoped that they will presently take to regular agricultural life. The girl with her enormously distended ear lobes and copper leg rings, is a fit mate for such wild men.

Photo, Mme. Vassal



IMPRISONED ANNAMESE PIG CROSSING A FLOODED RIVER TO MARKET

Being the marketing class of the nation, the women of Annam avoid the usual difficulties with a porker. They shut him in a tight, long, bamboo basket, in which he can be carried over river ford, by forest, or through unfenced fields, without chance of escape

Photo. Mme. Vassal

signal two Mois dash forward and hack at the buffalo's front legs so that it falls on its knees. The priest then cuts its throat with a dagger, and a number of Mois rush forward and finish it off with their lances. The priest receives the blood from the animal's throat, in a bowl and carries it into one of the huts, and the ceremony is then at an end. The animal is later cut up and divided, and the whole village partakes of a huge feast—after which the epidemic rages worse than ever.

The Mois have no notion of thrift. They do not think of drying some of the meat to preserve it. They never even grow enough rice to last them for the year, and six months of plenty is always followed by six months' starvation. During that time the Mois will feed on snails, slugs, and herbs from the forest if they cannot procure sufficient food by hunting with bows and arrows, or by fishing.

The national costume consists in the absence of it. Men and women have a flimsy veil draping the waist, with a

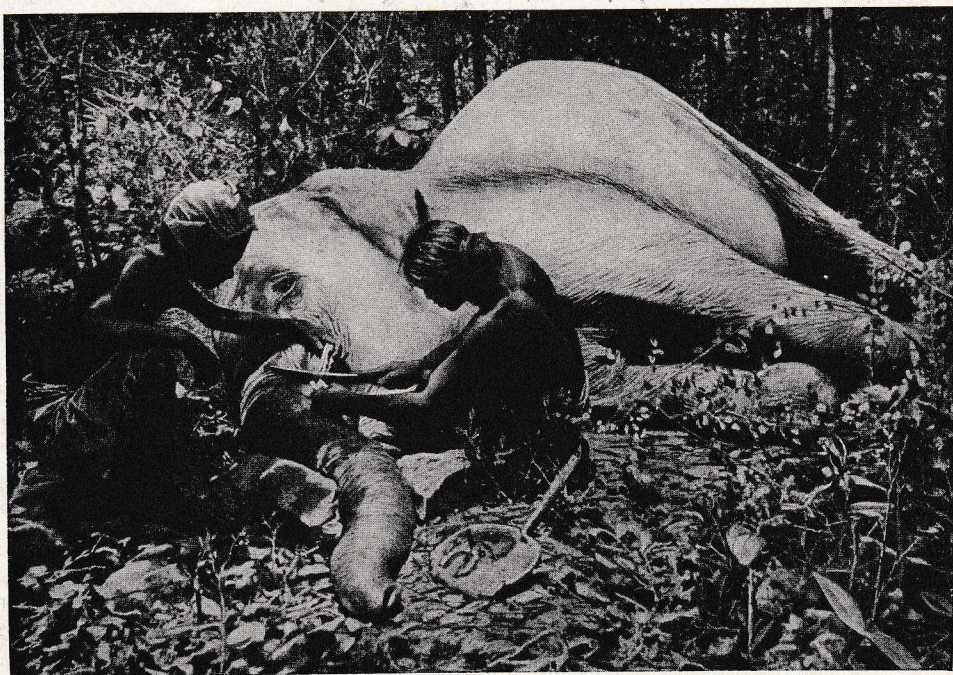
large waist-cloth for cold weather, and a rough cloak with a fringe. Women powder their hair with fragrant vetiver berry, dye their nails red, and, like the Annamese, lacquer their teeth. All customs, however, vary considerably, and as only a comparatively small part of the wild country is safe for travellers, no general statements can be made. There are, for instance, native tales of a remarkable copper-mine territory, in which women have developed the mother-right system of the Cham into a fierce female government.

In known regions the girls are valuable and are not sufficient for the usual monogamous system that prevails. The money they earn by spinning, weaving, and pot-making is a main source of wealth. As women, they will do all field and farm work. So their lovers have to earn them. In modern currency, which is not in use, they are worth fifty francs. Now an Annam slave, taken in a raid, is reckoned to earn in a year only five francs additional to his master's cost of keeping him. The labour



UNHAPPY ANNAMESE COMMITTING A SACRILEGE AGAINST THEIR TIGER GOD

Though suffering terribly from tiger attacks, villagers are loath to aid Europeans in killing the lord of the jungle. When forced to carry the slain beast, they go to their tiger altar and pray to the spirit of the tiger that it will forgive them the crime, and not take vengeance upon them and their kin



REVENGE UPON THE FALLEN TYRANT OF AN ANNAM VILLAGE

This elephant was one of a herd of forty that did great damage to the crops of a village, and was followed into the primitive forest by Mme. and Dr. Vassal. When shot by the doctor the monster was cut up for food by the natives, who, being without firearms, are almost helpless against a herd

Pho.os, Mme. Vassal



FOUR TYPICAL FIGURES OF THE LISSOM TRIBESMEN OF THE JUNGLE

These are men from the same Moi tribe in the backlands of Annam. They are stronger than the average Annamese, for the reason that their fever-haunted jungles sift out the weak from the strong in childhood, and thus maintain the strength of the savage race

Photo. Mme. Vassal

of a young, loving, free tribesman is esteemed at a higher price, but he has to serve his sweetheart's parents for a considerable time as son-in-law in the making before he earns a wife with perfect holed and drooping ears. Meanwhile, he lives with her. If he breaks off the engagement by paying the indemnity fixed beforehand, the girl is not hurt by having borne a baby to him. Rather does the child attract

another wooer, as evidence of the young woman's power as a family maker, and her daughters, especially, will be wealthy.

In marriage negotiations the lover's parents come to the mother and father of the young woman, always with some trepidation, with an offering of betel. The ceremony is called the "visit of the gift of betel to the little garden gate." Rejection is a dreadful humiliation. If the betel is accepted, chicken,



MOI WOMAN OF DANKIA, WORKING AND CARRYING HER CHILDREN

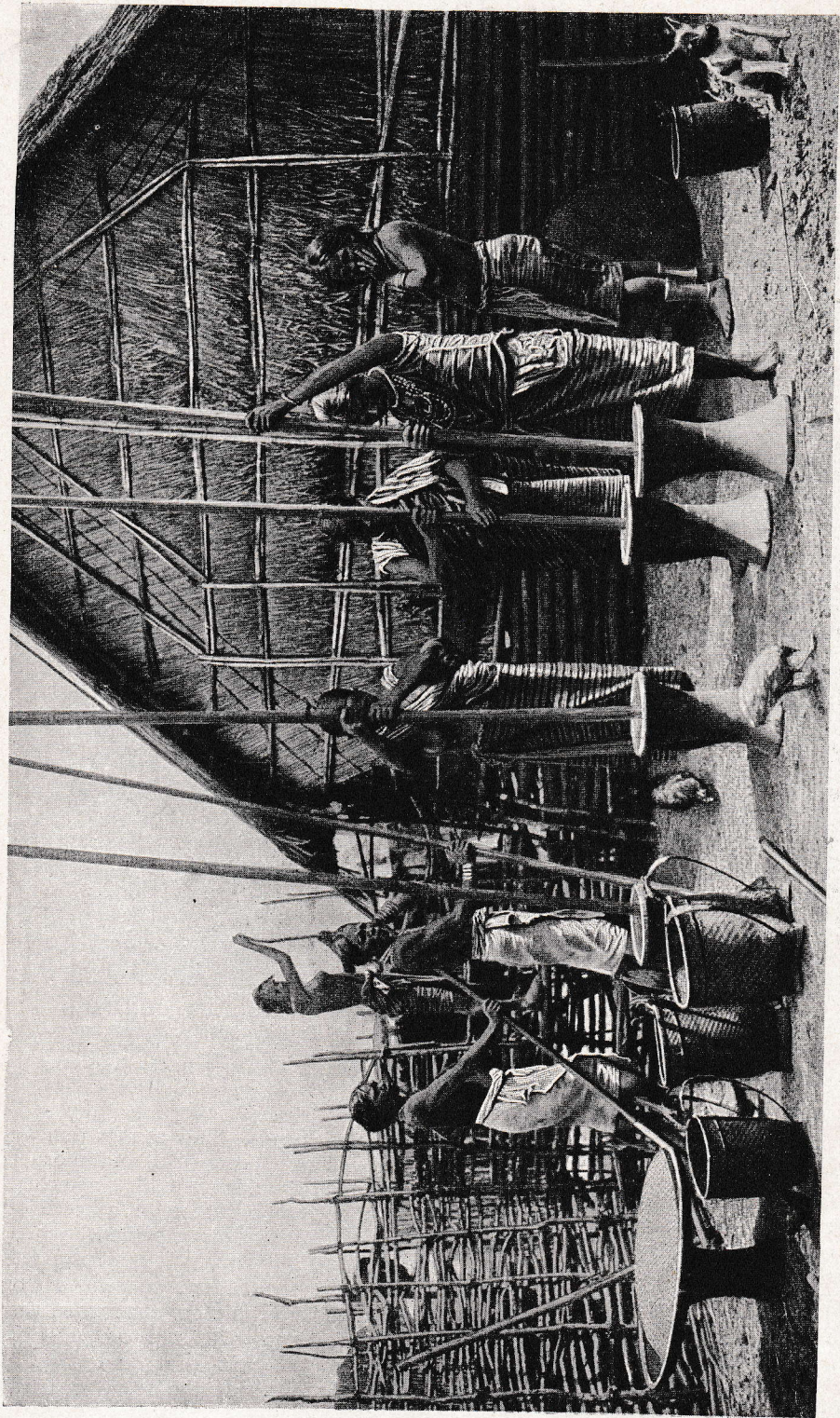
Women of the Moi stock are almost as strong as the men. Like these, they can bear great burdens over long distances; yet this young wife, going to labour in the fields, with two heavy children bound to her hips and slung from her shoulders, seems a wonder of grace in strength. This work, however, will soon age her

Photo, Mme. Vassal

rice, and other presents follow. There is seldom any dowry in a nation that makes its costliest jewelry of copper, and uses only forest orchid-blossom for hair ornament. Money consists almost entirely of gongs, pots, and jars, valued according to their age.

When the Moïs travel from one village to another they carry their goods in numerous baskets, one on top of the other, on their backs until they tower

above their heads. They cannot remove their burdens without help, and in order to rest their shoulders a stick is attached to the bottom basket with a piece of string which drags along behind. When they stand still this stick is propped underneath the baskets to relieve the weight. There is a story that when the first Europeans went into the interior they reported that they had seen a race with tails. If the story is true,



MOI WOMEN POUNDING PADDY FOR THE EVENING MEAL

So long as their harvest lasts, the Moi eat boiled, pounded rice for their evening meal, on returning from fishing and hunting. It is the work of the women to crush the paddy in mortars of ironwood with huge wooden pestles. The tribes, however, seldom sow enough rice, and have, part of the year, to feed on bamboo shoots

Photo, Agence Economique de l'Indo-Chine



TOE-MADE POTTERY OF THE WOMEN POTTERS OF ANNAM

The Annamese are remarkable for their widely separated big toes, and it is by using their feet with extraordinary quickness that Annam's girl pottery-makers have fashioned these pots placed by the kiln for firing. Men get the clay and fuel and work the kiln

Photo, Mme. Vassa!

what they probably saw were these Mois walking along, one behind the other, with sticks trailing behind them.

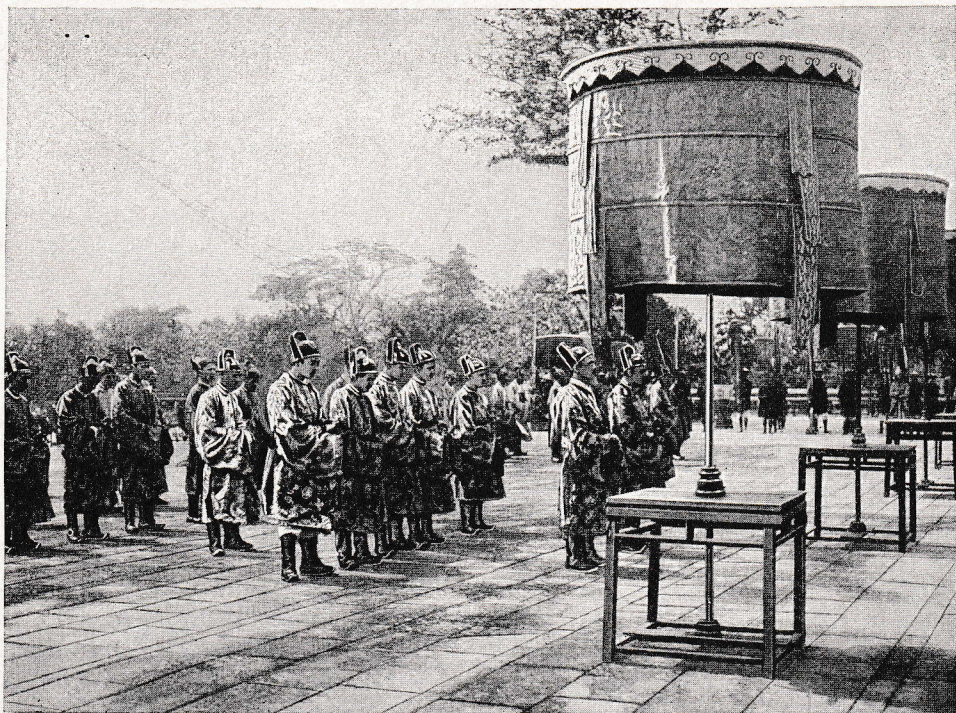
There is no property in land. Part of a forest is felled, and the trunks left to dry in November. In April the fallen timber is fired, and when the ashes are washed into the soil by the first rains, the women sow the rice for a year's supply and gather it. When the ground is exhausted, another patch of forest is cleared by the tribe in the same wasteful fashion to maintain the common granary. If the rice harvest does not last the year, as is often the case, bamboo shoots and forest roots, with the ordinary fishing and hunting by the men, provide food.

Iron is too abundant to be fought for, and is smelted and hammered into fine temper; but easy copper-bearing land, with ore just beneath the surface, leads to a war for tribal monopoly. For copper gongs are good money. Cross-bows, shooting barbed, poisoned arrows, spears, and two-handed swords, with

armour of thick wrappings of cloth that cleanse hostile weapons of their poison, are the personal instruments of warfare. Then there are great communal traps of grass planted with bamboo javelins for poisoning the feet.

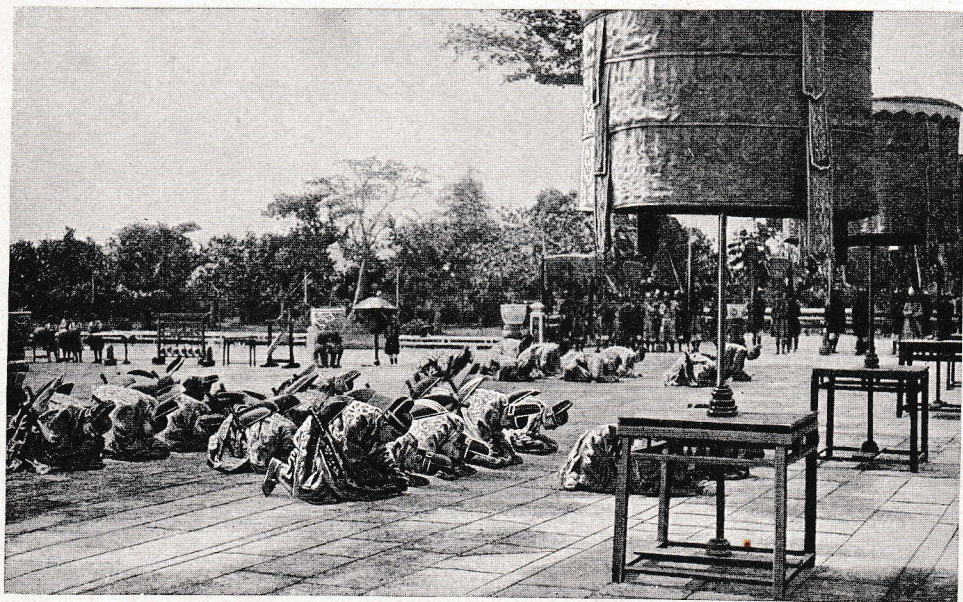
The sorcerers alone know the secrets of the best poisons, which are cardiac in action, and when absolutely fresh and of full strength should kill immediately. In practice this result is seldom achieved. Only two poisons have been at present revealed to the French by friendly wizards. They are the same as those used by the Sea-Dyaks of Borneo, who are connected with a Moi group that speaks a Malaya-Polynesian dialect. Other groups seem to have other secret poison brews, as they likewise have effective medicines unknown to science.

There are sorceresses as well as sorcerers, but I learnt little about them. The larger part of vast Moi-land is still a region of mysteries, full of curious knowledge, only to be won by eerie adventure and strange peril.



ANNAM MANDARINS WORSHIPPING THEIR EMPEROR'S ANCESTORS

This quaint and picturesque ceremony takes place in the palace grounds at Hué. All the chief mandarins and court officials have to worship the spirits of the present emperor of the Nguyen dynasty that was founded with French help, by a rebellious mandarin



HEAD KNOCKING TO THE MEMORIALS OF THE IMPERIAL ANCESTORS

This is the grand action in the ceremony of loyal submission to the present Annam dynasty. The mandarins and courtiers of the palace are performing the kowtow, by knocking their heads on the ground, to the ornamented drum-like objects dedicated to the imperial ancestors

Photos, Agence Economique de l'Indo-Chine

Annam

II. From Vassal Empire to French Colony

By Edward Wright

Writer of "The Story of French Expansion Overseas"

THE early history of Annam is an important and romantic affair.

Most of it, however, has still to be found and dug up from jungle and mountain slope, in the form of Sanscrit inscriptions, and we have at present chiefly to rely upon Chinese annals. About five thousand years ago, a long-headed Ganges folk worked through Assam into the country, and blended into the Indonesians, now represented by the Moi tribes of Indo-China spread from the eleventh to the twentieth degrees of latitude. A thousand years later, if we may trust Chinese chronicles, the Southern Chinese race moved down the coast, and began the Annamese settlement. Again the Ganges people moved into the country, coming by sea, with Sumatra as half-way house. They were Hindu priests and Rajput knights, with fighting men of their newly-created Malay race of Sumatra half-breeds.

About the first century of the Christian era the Chinese province in North Annam had to fight for extension of territory against the Hindu-Malay kingdom of Southern Annam, which was known as Champa, or the land of the Chams. At present there is only a suspicion that the Chams were successful and won the present site of the Annam capital of Hué, built a city there spread inland, and mixed with Tibetan invaders. They certainly tamed many of the inland Moi tribes, ran roads through the jungles, and built palaces and temples in the immense, fantastic Hindu style.

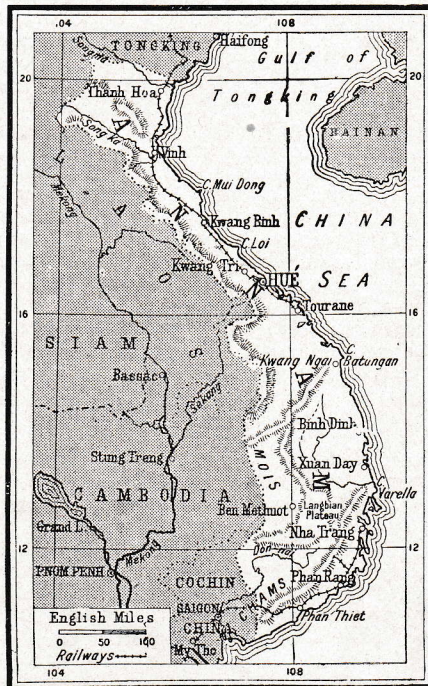
Meanwhile, the Annamese, who were rather a frail, patient, hardworking people with none of the Malay's inborn love of fighting or the hard, social discipline which the Rajput adventurers and their

priests imposed on their subjects, fluctuated between weak independence and strong imperial government. When the Chinese Emperor was weak, the Chinese mandarins of Annam kept the taxes and set up as monarchs. When Annam was fiercely pressed by the Chams, these corrupt officials recognized the imperial power and pleaded for an army to save the people. This very loose yet practical form of Chinese overlordship can be traced to the end of Annam history.

The Annamese are very proud of their alternating periods of independence, which they mainly owed to defaulting and avaricious mandarins of the Empire. The situation, however, was completely changed in the first part of the thirteenth century. Kubla Khan then sent a horde of his Mongols on a march of more than a thousand miles down the coast and into the shorelands of the Indian Ocean. The Annamese escaped destruction by resuming their vassalage to the new dynasty of the Empire, but, so far as we can at present see into the course of

events in Southern Annam and the lower Mekong region, the power of the Hindu-Malay State was permanently broken. A strong contingent of Malay forces appears to have been sent from Sumatra, but the Chams were also attacked by the rival neighbouring Hinduised race of Khmers in Cambodia that claim to have destroyed the old Cham cities.

The Mongols vanished, and down the shore of Southern Annam poured the Annamese, eager for the possession of great expanses of rice fields and fish supplies of the Mekong country. Possessing now solid economic power they again broke with China in 1288 but their control of the rice market naturally



ANNAM AND ITS PEOPLES



ROAD REPAIRING BY PANTALOONED AND UMBRELLA-HATTED WOMEN

Annam's peasant women share their men's labours, just as fishers' wives help in netting fish and row and steer the boats, except in night cruises. In towns, women often control silk works, without male help, and artisans' wives are usually excellent working partners to their men

Photo, Mme. Vassal

attracted the attention of the Empire. As soon as the Chinese overthrew the Mongols, their native Emperor, Hung-wu, founder of the Ming dynasty, cut down all palace expenses, enlarged his armies, and, about 1368, Annam was being squeezed of wealth by his mandarins.

Chinese rule then became so hard that it provoked a genuine Nationalist movement. The people rose under a leader, Le, who completely sapped the imperial power in his country, and, in 1427, made himself king in reality, while maintaining a show of vassalage by sending gifts of homage to Peking. Meanwhile, the struggle with the Chams continued. But, in spite of their overwhelming numbers and the use of stronger and taller Tongking subjects of the new Annam Empire, the small coast folk could not overcome the Moi tribes, who made slave raids upon them, nor seize the Cham country on the southern part of the Mekong River.

The Annamese Empire never matured. Owing to the weakness of the people and the corruption of the mandarins, it was rotten before it was ripe. Oriental luxury turned the royal family into weaklings, and although a faithful band of mandarins maintained an army and held things together, local governors kept the taxes they had collected, and with the money raised troops.

Chief among them was the southern governor, Nguyen Noang, who broke away

in 1570, and founded the present dynasty. He opened a war for the throne that lasted until the nineteenth century. The last heir of the Nguyen, after his father escaped from death by the help of the French bishop of Adran, was used by that priestly empire-builder to give France another Orient colony in place of lost India. The boy was educated as a Christian, taken to Paris in 1787, and promised a war fleet and a French army, which would have made him the figurehead of a protectorate.

The revolution prevented this expedition. But the empire-building bishop was equal to the occasion. At Pondichern he engaged officers, drill-sergeants, engineers, and army doctors, embarked his forces on two ships, landed in the country of the Annam prince, raised and trained a native army on the European model, and, dying in 1798, left only Tongking unsubdued, and his men won it by 1802.

The young prince, however, had penetrated the design of his fatherly bishop. He reverted to Confucianism, gave no favours, and played with the rest of the Frenchmen during the reign of Napoleon. With his European-trained troops he ended the long struggle with the Chams and invaded the Hindu territory of Cambodia. On the whole, he profited by his French education to arrange things to the distinct disadvantage of France.

ANNAM, THE VASSAL EMPIRE

Annam closed herself to all European commerce. By reason of the enormous power shown by the bishop of Adran, all Christian missionaries were regarded as heralds of invading armies. The feeling against missionaries was intensified in 1847, when the emperor's grandson, Tu-duc, ascended the throne, while missionaries were interfering on the question of succession. As soon as his seat was secured, Tu-duc began to persecute all Christians, and Napoleon III., who was then seeking for colonies, justified the Annamese suspicion of missionary effort by sending out a fleet in 1856 and storming the port of Tourane. In 1858 the conquest of the Mekong delta was attempted, but operations were interrupted by the war in Italy and the Chinese Expedition. In 1861 the campaign was vigorously renewed, and, after serious losses at Saigon, a French force of some four thousand men conquered the rice field country, and, by the summer of 1862, starved the Annamese into a peaceful state of mind.

France Abandons the Conquest of Annam

In 1867 operations were again resumed, and a great scheme of conquest planned, but the disaster of the French and German War left the French people sick of strife and particularly sick of any operations in the murderous climate of the Mekong River. Some wildly-daring attempts by local Frenchmen were answered by Annam mandarins engaging the services of hard-fighting Chinese rebels. In 1874 peace was made, the French giving the Annam emperor five steamships, guns, and rifles, but retaining Cochin China.

By way of further security against attacks, Tu-duc and his mandarins turned to the Manchu emperor of China, and, submitting to the old vassalage, gladly received the troops of their overlord into Tongking. Tu-duc thereby became a mere prince, but this did not save his country.

In 1882 Gambetta and Jules Ferry opened the new republican period of French expansion that Bismarck sinisterly favoured. Taking as a pretext the sullen hostility of the Annamese, the French bombarded and stormed Hanoi citadel on April 25th, 1882. The campaign thus started was long marked by reverses that angered the French people. After three French columns were forced to retreat from Sontay on the Red River in August, 1883, the Chinese regular army intervened in the war, and Chinese pirates, as well as old Taiping rebels, operated with them.

China Recognizes the French Protectorate

Two French commanders-in-chief were in turn replaced, and the third commander had his troops ambushed on March 24th, 1885, and was forced into retreat.

Meanwhile, the Chinese had been suffering from a rice blockade by the French fleet. As both sides were tired of war, the British Government mediated, and by the Peace of London, in 1885, China withdrew her troops, and the French Protectorate over the little Annam Empire was recognized. A year afterwards the power of the pirates was shattered, and in 1893 the Laos country was added to French Indo-China. The last Annam rebel leader, De-Tham, who had fled to the northern forests, died in 1913, but during the Great War, in which some Annamese served as labourers in France, the discontented native party, instead of making raids in the old fashion, resorted to the scientific weapons of modern revolutionaries. The quickness with which their plots were discovered made, however, a deep impression on the Annamese, and the country was quietening down in 1921, when the failure of the French Bank of Indo-China aggravated the money troubles of the people, who had enjoyed prosperity during the latter part of the war period.

ANNAM: FACTS AND FIGURES

The Country

French Protectorate on east coast of Indo-China, one of the five States of French Indo-China. Area, about 52,100 square miles. Population (1919), 5,952,000, including 2,117 Europeans. People of the towns and coast are Annamese; hill and jungle country, Chams, and various tribes grouped as Moi.

Government

French Indo-China is under a Governor-General with a Resident-Superior in Annam and other States. Annam is governed by its own king (Khai-Dinh, of the Nguyen dynasty, succeeded, 1916), with a council of ministers. He is closely controlled by French Government, acting through Resident-Superior. Local government is by Annamite officials under French control. French troops are stationed in citadel of Hué. Law is administered through native courts, with appeal to European courts at Saigon (Cochin China), and Hanoi (Tongking).

Commerce and Industries

Rice is chief product; also maize, cotton, mulberry, spices, sugar, betel, timber, india-rubber, coffee, and raw silk. Nearly 700,000 head of cattle are reared. Copper, zinc, and gold mines worked by Annamese in Quang-nam province; coal mines near Tourane, and salt works in various parts of the country.

Imports (1919), 9,250,000 francs; exports, 51,500,000 francs. Ports of Tourane, Qui-Nhon, and Xuan Day open to European trade. Customs dues collected by France.

Chief Towns

Binh Dinh (74,400); Hué, capital (60,600); Tourane (4,000); Qui-Nhon; Xuan Day.

Money

Common throughout French Indo-China: silver piastre (worth something less than 2s.), half, fifth, and tenth piastres. Also two bronze coins worth about a farthing and a third of a farthing.



THE MAN WHO TURNS THE TIDE OF BATTLE IN YEMEN'S DESERTS

By holding the coast towns, while he fought the Turks in the waterless inland plain of the Tehama, the Arab commander was able to save his men from thirst, gradually exhausting the larger forces of the Sultan of Turkey. Here we see one of his many water-carriers, with a camel-load of filled bottles, returning from the well by the mosque of Lohaya

Photo. Donald McLeish